لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

August 1965

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ROR

EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. He declared that God had conferred upon him the dignity of Prophethood. He claimed that he had received this blessing through being a perfect follower of the Holy Prophet. He claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the Expected Messenger of all the religions of the world. He explained that God had raised him for the purpose of re-establishing the dominion of Islam and to shed light upon the true teachings of the Holy Quran. With him, in fact, had started a new era, the Renaissance of Islam.

One startling historical disclosure he made, was that Jesus Christ had escaped death by crucifixion and had subsequently travelled to Kashmir, where his tomb still exists at Srinagar.

When Hazrat Ahmad published his claims and the revelations received by him, he encountered a severe storm of opposition from all quarters and all communities. In spite of this opposition God began to strengthen his voice and people began to follow him. At the time of his death in 1908, he had gathered around him a group of faithful and staunch followers, not only in India but also in other countries, numbering hundreds of thousands.

After his death in 1908, he was succeeded by the Late Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin Sahib as his First Khalifa. At his death in 1914, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, was elected as his Second Khalifa.

The new Caliph undertook a vast programme particularly of the propagation of Islam, and under his guidance, the Movement is carrying on vigorous missionary activities throughout the world. There is now a network of Ahmadiyya missions in almost every free country.

Any information or literature about *Ahmadiyyat* can be had from the Ahmadiyya missions in different parts of the world or direct from :

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Rabwah, West Pakistan.

For outside Pakistan

The Secretary,
Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions,
Tahrik-i-Jadid,
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This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept any responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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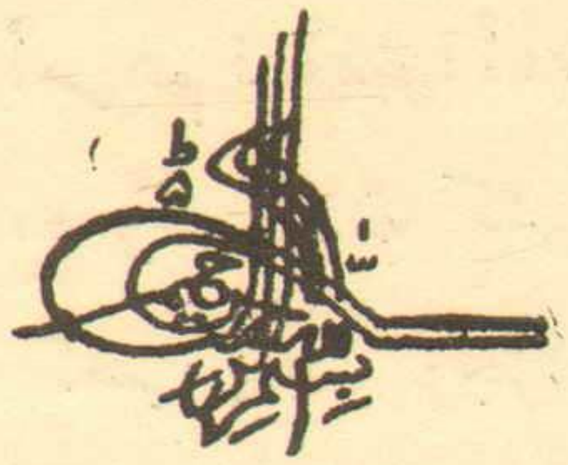

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

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Thus Said the Holy Prophet

عن عبدالله بن كعب بن مالك قال : سمعت كعب بن مالك رضى الله عنه يحدث بحديثه حين تخلف عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى غزوة تبوك . قال كعب : لم أتخلف عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى غزوة غزاها قط الا فى غزوة تبوك غير أنى قد تخلفت فى غزوة بدر ولم يعاتب أحد تخلف عنه، انما خرج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم والمسلمون يريدون عير قريش حتى جمع الله تعالى بينهم وبين عدوهم على غير ميعاد . ولقد شهدت مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلة العقبة حين تواثقنا على الاسلام ، وما أحب أن لى بها مشهد بدر وان كانت بدر أذكر فى الناس منها . وكان من خبرى حين تخلفت عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى غزوة تبوك أنى لم أكن قط أقوى ولا أيسر منى حين تخلفت عنه فى تلك الغزوة ، والله ماجمعت قبلها راحلتين قط حتى جمعتهما فى تلك الغزوة ولم يكن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يريد غزوة الا ورى بغيرها حتى كانت تلك الغزوة ، فغزاها رسول

الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى حر شديد ، واستقبل سفراً بعيداً ومفازاً واستقبل عدداً كثيراً. فجلى للمسلمين أمرهم ليتأهبوا أهبة غزوهم فأخبرهم بوجههم الـذى يريـد ، والمسلمون مع رسول الله كثير ولا يجمعهم كتاب حافظ ''يريد بذلك الديوان،، قال كعب : فقل رجل يريـد أن يتغيب الا ظـن أن ذلك سيخفى بـه مالم ينزل فيه وحى من الله , وغـزا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تلك الغزوة حين طابت الثمار والظلال فأنا اليها أصعر فتجهز رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم والمسلمون معـه وطفقت أغـدو لكى أتجهز معـه فأرجع ولم أقض شيئاً وأقول ـ فى نفسى ـ أناقادر على ذلك اذا أردت فلم يزل ذلك يتمادى بى حتى استمر بالناس الجد فأصبح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم غادياً والمسلمون معه ولم أقض من جهازى شيئاً ثم غـدوت فرجعـت ولم أقض شيئـاً فلم يزل ذلك يتمـادى بى حتى أسرعوا وتفـارط الغزو فهممت أن أرتحل فأدركهم فياليتنى فعلت ثم لم يقدر ذلك لى فطفقت اذا خرجت فى الناس بعد خروج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يحزننى أنى لا أرى لى أسوة الا رجلا مغموصاً عليـه فى النفاق أو رجـلا ممن عـذر الله تعالى من الضعفاء ولم يذكرنى رسول الله صلى الله عليـه وسلم حتى بلغ تبوك فقال وهو جالس فى القوم بتبوك : مافعل كعب بـن مالك ؟ فقـال رجل من بنى سلمـة : يا رسول الله حبسه برداه والنظر فى عطفيـه . فقال له معاذ بن جبل رضى الله عنه : بئس ماقلت ! والله يا رسول الله ما علمنـا عليـه الا خيراً ، فسكت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فبينـا هو على ذلك رأى رجلا مبيضا يزول به السراب فقـال رسول الله صلى الله عليـه وسلم : كن أبا خيثمة فاذا أبو خيثمة الانصارى وهو الذى تصـدق بصـاع التمر حين لمزه المنـافقون قال كعب : فلما بلغنى أن رسول الله صلى الله عليـه وسلم قد توجه قافلا من تبوك حضرنى بثى فطفقت أتذكر الكذب و أقول بم أخرج من سخطه غدا وأستعين على ذلك بكل ذى رأى من اهلى ، فلما

قيل ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قد أظل قادماًزاح عنى الباطل حتى عرفت أنى لم أنج منه بشى أبداً ، فأجمعت صدقه وأصبح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قادماً ، وكان اذا قدم من سفر بدأ بالمسجد فركع فيه ركعتين ثم جلس للناس ، فلما فعل ذلك جاءه المخلفون يعتذرون اليه ويحلفون له . وكانوا بضعاً وثمانين رجلا فقبل منهم علانيتهم و بايعهم واستغفر لهم ووكل سرائرهم الى الله تعالى حتى جئت فلما سلمت تبسم تبسم المغضب ثم قال : تعال ، فجئت أمشى حتى جلست بين يديه فقال لى : ماخلفك ؟ ألم تكن قد ابتعت ظهرك قال قلت : يارسول الله انى والله لو جلست عند غيرك من أهل الدنيا لرأيت أنى سأخرج من سخطه بعذر ؛ لقد أعطيت جدلا ولكنى والله لقد علمت لئن حدثتك اليوم حديث كذب ترضى به عنى ليوشكن الله يسخطك على و ان حدثتك حديث صدق تجد على فيه انى لارجو فيه عقبى الله عزوجل والله ما كان لى من عذر ، والله ما كنت قط أقوى ولا أيسر منى حين تخلفت عنك قال : فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : أما هذا فقد صدق فقم حتى يقضى الله فيك . وسار رجال من بنى سلمة فاتبعونى فقالوا لى : والله ماعلمناك أذنبت ذنباً قبل هذا لقد عجزت فى أن لا تكون اعتذرت الى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بما اعتذر به المخلفون ، فقد كان كافيك ذنبك استغفار رسول الله صلى اللهعليهوسلم لك . قال : فوالله مازالوا يؤنبوننى حتى اردت ان أرجع الى رسول اللهصلى اللهعليهوسلم فأكذب نفسى ، ثم قلت لهم : هل لقى هذا معى من احد قالوا : نعم لقيه معك رجلان قالا مثل ماقلت و قيل لهما مثل ما قيل لك ، قال : قلت : من هما ؟ قالوا : مرارة بن الربيع العمرى، وهلال بن أمية الواقفى ، قال: فذكروا لى رجلين صالحين قد شهدا بدراً فيهما أسوة قال : فمضيت حين ذكروهما لى . ونهى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن كلامنا أيها الثلاثة من بين من تخلف عنه قال : فاجتنبنا

الناس ــ أوقال تغيروا لنا ــ حتى تنكرت لى فى نفسى الأرض فما هى بالأرض التى أعرف فلبثنا على ذلك خمسين ليلة . فأما صاحباى فاستكانا وقعدا فى بيوتهما يبكيان وأما أنا فكنت أشب القوم وأجلدهم فكنت أخرج فأشهد الصلاة مع المسلمين وأطوف فى الأسواق ولا يكلمنى أحد وآتى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأسلم عليه وهو فى مجلسه بعد الصلاة فأقول فى نفسى هل حرك شفتيه برد السلام أم لا ؟ ثم أصلى قريباً منه وأسارقه النظر ، فاذا أقبلت على صلاتى نظر الى واذا التفت نحوه أعرض عنى، حتى اذا طال ذلك على من جفوة المسلمين مشيت حتى تسورت جدار حائط أبى قتادة وهو ابن عمى وأحب الناس الى فسلمت عليه فو الله مارد على السلام فقلت له: ياأبا قتادة أنشدك بالله هل تعلمنى أحب الله ورسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم فسكت فعدت فناشدته فسكت فعدت فناشدته . فقال : الله ورسوله أعلم . ففاضت عيناى و توليت حتى تسورت الجدار، فبينا أنا أمشى فى سوق المدينة اذا نبطى من نبط أهل الشام ممن قدم بالطعام يبيعه بالمدينة يقول: من يدل على كعب بن مالك ؟ فطفق الناس يشيرون له الى حتى جاءنى فدفع الى كتاباً من ملك غسان ، و كنت كاتباً ، فقرأته فاذا فيه : أما بعد فانه قد بلغنا أن صاحبك قد جفاك ولم يجعلك الله بدار هوان ولا مضيعة ، فالحق بنا نواسك . فقلت حين قرأتها : وهذه أيضاً من البلاء فتيممت بها التنور فسجرتها ، حتى اذا مضت أربعون من الخمسين و استلبث الوحى اذا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يأتينى فقال ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يأمرك أن تعتزل امرأتك ، فقلت : أطلقها أم ماذا أفعل فقال لابل اعتزلها فلا تقربها وأرسل الى صاحبى بمثل ذلك : فقلت لامرأتى : الحقى بأهلك فكونى عندهم حتى يقضى الله فى هذا الأمر . فجاءت امرأة هلال بن أمية رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالت له : يارسول الله ان هلال بن أمية شيخ ضائع ليس له خادم فهل تكره أن أخدمه ؟ قال لا ، ولكن لايقر

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بنک. فقالت : انه والله مابه من حرکة الی شیٔ ووالله مازال یبکی منذ کان من أمره ما کان الی یومه هذا . فقال لی بعض أهلی : لو استأذنت رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم فی أمرأتك فقد أذن لامرأة هلال بن أمیة أن تخدمه ؟ فقلت: لاأستأذن فیها رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم وما یدرینی ماذا یقول رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم اذا استأذنته فیها وأنا رجل شاب فلبثت بذلك عشر لیال فکمل لنا خمسون لیلة من حین نهی عن کلامنا ثم صلیت صلاة الفجر صباح خمسین لیلة علی ظهر بیت من بیوتنا، فبینا أنا جالس علی الحال التی ذکر الله تعالی منا قد ضاقت علی نفسی وضاقت علی الأرض بما رحبت سمعت صوت صارخ أوفی علی سلع یقول بأ علی صوته : یا کعب بن مالك أبشر ، فخررت ساجداً وعرفت انه قد جاء فرج . فآذن رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم الناس بتوبة الله عز وجل علینا حین صلی صلاة الفجر فذهب الناس یبشروننا ، فذهب قبل صاحبی مبشرون ورکض الی رجلی فرساً وسعی ساع من اسلم قبلی واوفی علی الجبل ، فکان الصوت اسرع من الفرس ، فلما جاءنی الذی سمعت صوته یبشرنی نزعت له ثوبی فکسوتهما ایاه ببشراه والله ماامللك غیرهما یومئذ ، واستعرت ثوبین فلبستهما وانطلقت اتأمم رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم یتلقانی الناس فوجاً فوجاً یهنئونی بالتوبة و یقولون لی : لتهنك توبة الله علیك حتی دخلت المسجد فاذا رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم جالس حوله الناس ، فقام طلحة بن عبید الله رضی الله عنه یهرول حتی صافحنی وهنأنی والله ماقام رجل من المهاجرین غیره . قال کعب : فلما سلمت علی رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم قال وهو یبرق وجهه من السرور : ابشر بخیر یوم مر علیك مذ ولدتك امك فقلت : امن عندك یارسول الله ام من عند الله ؟ قال : لابل من عند الله عز وجل ، و کان رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم اذا سر استنار وجهه حتی کان وجهه قطعة

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قمر و كنا نعرف ذلك منه، فلما جلست بين يديه قلت : يارسول الله ان من توبتى ان انخلع من مالى صدقة الى الله والى رسوله. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم امسك: عليك بعض مالك فهو خير لك. فقلت انى امسك سهمى الذى بخيبر و قلت : يارسول الله ان الله تعالى انما انجانى بالصدق وان من توبتى ان لا احدث الا صدقاً ما بقيت، فو الله ماعلمت احداً من المسلمين ابلاه الله تعالى فى صدق الحديث منذ ذكرت ذلك لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احسن مما ابلانى الله تعالى والله ماتعمدت كذبة منذ قلت ذلك لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الى يومى هذا وانى لأرجو ان يحفظنى الله تعالى فيما بقى ، قال : فانزل الله تعالى (لقد تاب الله على النبى والمهاجرين و الانصار الذين اتبعوه فى ساعة العسرة) حتى بلغ : (انه بهم رءوف رحيم * وعلى الثلاثة الذين خلفوا حتى اذا ضاقت عليهم الارض بما رحبت) حتى بلغ : (اتقوا الله و كونوا مع الصادقين) قال كعب : والله ما أنعم الله على من نعمة قط بعد اذ هدانى الله للاسلام اعظم فى نفسى من صدقى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان لا اكون كذبته فاهلك كما هلك الذين كذبوا ؛ ان الله تعالى قال للذين كذبوا حين انزل الوحى شر ماقال لاحد فقال الله تعالى : (سيحلفون بالله لكم اذا انقلبتم اليهم لتعرضوا عنهم فأعرضوا عنهم انهم رجس وماواهم جهنم جزاء بما كانوا يكسبون يحلفون لكم لترضوا عنهم فان ترضوا عنهم فان الله لا يرضى عن القوم الفاسقين) قال كعب : كنا خلفنا ايها الثلاثة عن امر اولئك الذين قبل منهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين حلفوا له فبايعهم واستغفر لهم وأرجأ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم امرنا حتى قضى الله عالى فيه بذلك . قال الله تعالى : (وعلى الثلاثة الذين خلفوا) وليس الذى ذكر مما خلفنا تخلفنا عن الغزو وانما هو تخليفه ايانا وارجاؤه امرنا عمن حلف له واعتذر اليه فقبل منه ـ

Abdullah bin Kaab bin Malik reports that he heard his father Kaab bin Malik relate the story of his remaining behind the Holy Prophet at Medina, when the Holy Prophet marched on Tabuk.

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Kaab Says :

"I never remained behind from any of the expeditions of the the Holy Prophet except that of Tabuk. Only that I was absent at Battle of Badr but none of the absentees were admonished then. On that occasien the Holy Prophet and the Muslims went out only to intercept the caravan of Quraish, but that Allah brought them and their enemy together without any previous appoitment.

I was present at the night of Aqba when we made a covenant on Islam with the Holy Prophet. And inspite of the fact that the Battle of Badr is more talked about by people I do not wish to have been present there instead of at Aqba.

The story of my remaining behind the Holy Prophet on the occasion of the Battle of Tabuk is that I was never more fit nor more wealthy before that time. By God, never before I had a pair of camels as I had at that time.

While going on an expedition the Holy Prophet never divulged the place he intended to go but always covered it up by some other place except on this occasion. The Holy Prophet fought this battle in summer when the season was very hot and he was faced with a long journey through a stretch of land with scarce water and a large number of enemy. Therefore he very clearly informed the Muslims of these facts, and conveyed to them where he intended to go, so that they may prepare themselves for the war. The Muslims accompanying the Holy Prophet were in great numbers and their names were not recorded in any register. Few believed, who wanted to absent themselves, that their absence will not be marked except if Allah's word comes about it.

The Holy Prophet started on this expedition at a time when the fruits were ripe and the shadows pleasent and I

was very much inclined and attracted to them. The Holy Prophet and the Muslims began their preparations. I also started to go out in the morning to arrange for equipment but returned in the evening without accomplishing anything and used to say to myself that I can do it when I will. This kept me delaying till the people were in a frenzy. One morning the Holy Prophet started on the journey and the Muslims were with Him and I had not yet arranged anything for my equipment. Again I went out in the morning but returned and still I had not accomplished anything. This kept me delaying all the time while they marched rapidly away. I made up my mind to depart and catch up with them. Would that I had done that ! But it was not to be my fate. Then afterwards I started feeling grieved, as when I went out I saw none except established hypocrites or those who were unfit and excused by Allah.

The Holy Prophet did not mention me till he reached Tabuk where while sitting among his companions he asked :

"What did Kaab bin Malik do" ?

Someone from Banu Salma said, "His wealth and his self-admiration prevented him."

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At this Maaz bin Jabal said :

"How bad is what you say." Then addressing the Holy Prophet he said : "By God we know nothing about him except goodness".

The Holy Prophet remained silent. While he was still there, he saw a man wearing white clothes, moving in the mirage and said :

"Be thou Abu khaisma". And lo ! he was actually Abu Khaisma Ansari (he was the person whom the hypocrties had taunted when once he offered Only a *Sa'* of dates as charity [1]).

When the news reached me that the Holy Prophet has started back from Tabuk, a feeling of deep grief and remorse came over me. I started thinking up some excuse and asked

1 صاع — Sa' — is a measure for grain equivalent to 6 Lb. approximately.

myself :

"How shall I escape his displeasure tomorrow", and for this I sought help from every competent person in my family. But when the word spread that Holy Prophet is reaching Medina shortly, all falsehood left me and I discovered that I can never save myself by false excuses. Therefore I determined to stick to the truth. In the morning, the Holy Prophet arrived.

It was a custom of the Holy Prophet that whenever he returned from journey, the first thing he did was to go to the Mosque and offer two *rakaahs* and then sit down to meet the people. This time when he did this some eighty odd people who had remained behind came to him offering excuses on oaths. The Holy Prophet accepted whatever they declared and accepted their allegiance and asked Allah's forgiveness for them and entrusted whatever they concealed to Him.

On my turn I came to him. When I greeted him, he smiled an angry smile and said : "Come here." I came walking and sat in front of him. He asked me :

"What kept you behind ? Had you not bought your camels ? "

I answered :

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"I am gifted with eloquence and if I were sitting with someone else of the worldly people, instead of you, I am sure I would have escaped his displeasure with some sort of an excuse. But, By God ! I know if today I tell you a false story that you accept from me, in future, perchance, Allah may cause you to be displeased with me even if I tell you the truth, and you may become angry with me. By the grace of Allah I am hopeful of good consequences in this case. By God ! I had no excuse. By God ! I was never more fit nor more prosperous than I was at the time I remained behind you."

The Holy Prophet said : "Now, this one told has the truth. Go and wait till Allah decides about you."

Some people of Banu Salmah rose hurriedly and followed me. They said to me :

"By God we have never known you so helpless in any wrong you did before. Why did you not offer the Holy Prophet the excuse that the others who remained behind have offered? As the *istighfar* of the Holy Prophet would have been enough for the redemption of your sins."

They pampered me so long that I almost made up my mind to go back to the Holy Prophet and belie myself.

Then I asked them :

"Has anybody else met the same as I."

They answered :

"Yes, two other persons have also met the same. They stated what you stated and they were told what you were told."

I asked them :

"Who are they."

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They said :

"Marrara bin Rabi al-umri and Hilal bin Ommayya al-waqifi." They named two pious men who had been present at the battle of Badr. In them was a good example. When they mentioned these two I left and went away.

The Holy Prophet forbade everyone to speak to us three out of all those who had remained behind. So all the people avoided us. So much so that the world changed for me and it was not the world that I knew. We remained in this state for fifty nights. My two companions were stricken with grief and shut themselves up in their homes crying. But being young and strong I would go out and attend the prayers with other Muslims and roam through the streets. But nobody ever talked to me. I would also come to the Holy Prophet and greet him while he sat in the mosque after the prayers, and would ask myself whether he moved his lips in return of the greetings or not? Then I would say my Prayers close to him and look at him stealthily. When I busied myself in my Prayers, he would look at me, but when I turned towards him he ignored me. When a long time passed over the estrangement of Muslims with me, one day I went and leapt over the wall of the orchard belonging to Abu Qutada, my cousin, and most dear to me. I greeted him but God is my witness he did not return my greetings.

I said to him ;

"Abu Qutada, I adjure you by Allah, Do'nt you know that I love Allah and His Prophet ?" But he remined silent. I again adjured him but again he remained silent. I again adjured him then he said :

"Allah and His Prophet know better."

Tears welled up in my eyes. I turned and went away and again leapt over the wall.

Once while I was strolling in the market of Medina I saw one of the Nabtean farmers of Syria who had come to Medina to sell their grains, saying :

"who would guide me to Ka'ab bin Malik. ?"

People started pointing me out. He came to me and gave me a letter from the king of Ghassan. I was literate. I read it and found the following in it :

"The news has reached us that your master has ill-treated you. God has not made you to live in the land of humiliation and ruin and to forfeit your rights. Join us, we will console you and help you." When I read this I said to myself : "This is yet another trial." Then I took the letter to an oven and burnt it.

When forty out of the total fifty days passed and still the word of Allah did not come, a messenger of the Holy Prophet came to me and said :

"The Holy Prophet orders you to separate yourself from your wife."

I asked him :

"Shall I divorce her or what"?

He said :

"No, just keep away from her and do'nt go near her." The Holy Prophet sent similar instructions to my two companions also.

I said to my wife :

"Go and join your family and remain with them till Allah gives judgment in this case and decides the matter."

The wife of Hilal bin Ommayya came to the Holy Prophet and said :

"Hilal bin Ommayya is a very old man. He has got no servant. Do you disapprove of my serving him?"

He answered :

"No, I do'nt, but he should not come near you".

She said :

"By God! he has got no interest in anything. He has been constantly crying since the day this thing started till this day."

Some one from my family said to me :

"You also should ask permission from the Holy Prophet about your wife as he has given permission to the wife of Hilal bin Ommayya to serve him."

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I answered :

"I am young and I do'nt know what he will say, therefore, I do'nt like to request the Holy Prophet about her."

I remained thus for ten nights, till fifty nights were completed from the day talking to us was prohibited. On the fiftieth morning I said my Fajr Prayers on the roof of one of my houses and while I sat there my condition was as Allah has stated, my own life lay heavily on me and the whole wide world tightened around me. I heard the voice of someone from Mount Salah, shouting on the top of his voice :

"Glad tidings be to you! Ka'ab bin Malik" I recognized that relief has come so I fell down in *Sajda*.

The Holy Prophet after leading the morning Prayers had informed the people of the acceptance of our repentance by Allah. The people hurried to congratulate us. Some of the greeters

went to my two companions and one came riding swiftly to me on a horse. Another, of the tribe of Aslam, came running towards me and another climbed up the mountain. The voice was quicker than the horse. When the man, whose voice I had heard gretting me, reached me, I took off my clothes and gave them to him in appreciation of the good news that he had brought. Witness to God, on that day I had no other clothes except those, and I had to borrow a suit of clothes to dress up. I went intending to see the Holy Prophet. On the way people met me in groups congratulting me saying :

"Congratulations on your pardon". Finally I reached the mosque and saw the Holy Prophet sitting and the people sitting around him. Aalha bin Obaidullah got up and came running to me, and shook hands with me and congratulated me. No one else of the Muhajirins got up. When I greeted the Holy Prophet, his face was shining with happiness.

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He said :

"Congratulations on the best day that has dawned on you since the day you were born."

I asked :

"Is the pardon from you yourself or from Allah".

He said :

"No, it is from Allah, the Glorious, the Majestic." Whenever the Holy Prophet was delighted, his face would so light up that it seemed as if his face was a piece of full moon. And we used to find this out.

When I sat down before him I said :

"It is meet that I part with all my property giving them as alms to Allah and His Prophet."

The Holy Prophet said :

"Withold some of your property, it would be better for you."

I said :

"I retain for myself my share at Khyber. Allah has saved me because of my truthfulness, and my pardon requires that I must never speak but the truth for the rest of my life." By God ! I do not know any of the Muslims whom Allah has rewarded better than he has rewarded me for truthfulness, since the day I promised the Holy Prophet till this day, and I hope that Allah will watch over me for the rest of my days.

The word of Allah came down thus :

لقد تاب الله على النبى والمهاجرين و الانصار الـذين اتبعوه فى ساعة العسرة عليهم.....انه بهم رؤف رحيم - وعلى الثلثة الذين خلفوا حتى اذاضاقت عليهم الارض بما رحبت.....اتقواالله و كونو مع الصادقين .

"Allah has certainly turned with mercy to the Prophet and to the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of distress after the hearts of a party of them had well-nigh swered. He again turned to them with mercy. Surely, He is to them Compassionate. Merciful.

"And He has turned mercy to the three whose case was deferred, until, the earth became too strait for them with all its vastness and their souls were also straitened for them, and they became convinced that there was no refuge from Allah save unto Himself. Then He turned to them with mercy that they might turn to Him. Surely, it is Allah Who is Oft-Returning with compassion and is Merciful. O ye who believe! fear Allah and be with the truthful." (9 : 117, 118, 119.)

By God ! I do not regard any other blessing of Allah to be greater than this of speaking the truth to the Holy Prophet, except of course when Allah guided me to accept Islam. For if I had lied to him I would also have been lost like the others who lied. As Allah in His Book spoke about those who lied in severer terms than about anyone else.

سيحلفون بالله لكم اذاً انقلبتم اليهم لتعرضوا عنهم فاعرضوا عنهم انهم رجس ومأواهم جهنم جزاء بما كانوا يكسبون يحلفون لكم لترضوا عنهم فان ترضوا عنهم فان الله لا يرضى عن القوم الفاسقين .

"They will swear to you by Allah, when you return to them, that you may leave them alone. So leave them alone. Surely, they are an abomination, and their abode is Hell—a fit recompense for that which they used to earn.

"They will swear to you that you may be pleased with them. But even if you be pleased with them, Allah will not be pleased with the rebellious people " (9 : 95, 96.)

Decision in our case was postponed unlike those whose excuses were offered on oaths, and their declaration of allegiance the Holy Prophet accepted and prayed for their forgiveness. The Holy Prophet deferred our case till Allah decided about it This mention of "remaining behind" is not the remaining behind from the expeditlon, it refers to the deferment of our case, as against the case of those whose excuses were accepted.

Principles and Pre-requisites of Prayer

(Continued)

The Promised Messiah

Translated by A.R. Khan Bengalee

XV

ALLAH has, at the very beginning of the Holy Quran, taught us to pray, and has also told us how to pray. The recitation of "Sura Fatiha" (the first Chapter of the Holy Quran), is indispensable in the Prescribed Prayers, and "Sura Fatiha" is nothing but a supplication. This shows clearly that it is in the Prescribed Prayers that real supplication is to be made.

This Divinely taught supplication "Sura Fatiha" starts as follows :

> "All praise belongs to ALLAH, the Lord of the worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful."

This shows that before supplication, glorification of ALLAH, is essential. The glorification of God produces ardent desire and love for Him.

XVI

It is wrong nnd foolish to lay conditions on ALLAH while supplicating to Him. The Holy persons who gained Divine Grace and Favour, gained it through self-annihilation in the path of God. ALLAH knows full well those who are to go astray after some time. They themselves bear witness to their own condition by complaining to people that their prayer is not accepted.

Often, during the interval between the prayer and its acceptance, one is subjected to successive and disheartening trials and tribulations, but a steadfast and right-minded man scents the bounty of his Lord even during these trials and difficulties, and discerns, by his farsightedness, the Divine Succour which is to follow them. One of the secrets of these trials is that they give impetus to and accentuate supplication. With the increase of agony and anguish, the pathos of the heart also increases and this state of the heart is an essential pre-requisite for the

acceptance of prayer. So, one should never be impatient, or lose heart and entertain evil conjectures about God. One should never think that one's prayers are not or will not be accepted. Such a conjecture leads to the rejection of the Divine attribute of accepting prayers.

XVII

Remember, one cannot benefit by prayer until one shows extreme patience and continues praying steadfastly. One should never entertain doubt about God and should firmly believe that He possesses all powers and can do whatever He wills, and one should continue praying with patience. Then the time shall come when one's prayer shall be accepted and answered by ALLAH. One who uses this prescription is never unlucky and frustrated, surely, he achieves his purpose.

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XVIII

For the decision of every affair, the Holy Quran provides a criterion. After Joseph, peace be on him, was separated from his father, through the machinations of his brothers, Jacob had been praying for him, continuously for forty years. Had he been hasty, he would have no success in his prayer. He had been praying for forty years, pinning his faith in the Omnipotence of God. After forty years, his prayers brought Joseph to him. Some fault-finders ridiculed Jacob, saying that he was praying for Joseph in vain. But his reply was that he knew from God what they did not know. Of course, he knew nothing more than that he got the scent of Joseph. At first, he only knew that the chain of prayers was being prolonged. Had God intended not to accept his prayer, He would have answered soon. The prolongation of the chain of his prayers was indicative of the acceptance of his prayer. A compassionate man can never tolerate that the beggar should stay long at his door and then go away empty-handed. The stingiest of the stingy also does not do so; he also gives someting to the beggar if he allows him to stay long at his door. The verse of the Holy Quran depicting Jacob's grief for his son Joseph, "His eyes became white", proves the length of the period of Hazrat Jacob's supplication. So one should never get tired of or disappointed at the prolongation of the chain of supplication.

XIX

According to my own conviction, the enemy also should not be excluded from the range of prayer. The wider the range of prayer, the greater will the supplicant be benefited. The more stingy one will be in prayer, the more one will be deprived of Divine propinquity. The truth is that he who limits the bounty of God which is very vast is weak in faith.

XX

In the prayer, "Thee Alone do we worship, and Thee Alone do we implore for help", "Thee Alone do we worship" has been given precedence on the ground that man, while praying approaches God, after he has used all his God-given powers. It is an impertinence to approach God without making use of one's faculties and the laws of nature. The truth is that he who does not have recourse to effort, does not really pray, rather, tries God. Hence, before praying, one should use all his powers. This is the significance of the foregoing prayer. First, man should look into his own faith and conduct, because it is the Divine practice that reformation is effected through means. God creates some means which brings about reformation.

XXI

Remember, if prayer is answered very soon, generally it is not propitious. So do not lose hope while praying. When the answer to your prayer is delayed, rejoice and prostrate before God, out of gratitude, because it is good and auspicious for you. Delay brings success.

XXII

It should be remembered that for the acceptance of prayer there are some conditions. Some of them concern the person who prays, and some, the person at whose instance or for whom the prayer is offered. The person for whom the prayer is offered, should have fear of God and should always be afraid of God's Self-sufficiency, and should have compromise or adjustment and righteousness as his motto. When one pleases God by one's

righteousness and piety, the door of acceptance of prayer is opened. On the other hand, if a man displeases God and fights Him, his mischievousness and evil deeds serve as a rocky wall of obstacles in the way of the acceptance of prayer, and the door of acceptance is closed against him. So, friends should save their prayers from being wasted and should place no obstacle in their acceptance, which may be created by their unbecoming actions. They should follow the path of righteousness of 'Shariah' or Divine Laws. ALLAH says in the Holy Quran that He accepts the prayer of the righteous. This is His promise, and God does not break His promise. In short, righteousness is an essential pre-requisite for the acceptance of prayer. So, if a person, being negligent and going astray, wants that his prayers should be accepted, he is foolish and ignorant. So, every member of our Community should, as far as possible follow the path of righteousness, so that, he may have the bliss and pleasure of the acceptance of his prayer, and be blessed with increased faith.

XXIII

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The Holy Quran has mentioned two aspects of the acceptance of prayer. One is that ALLAH wants to have His Own Will accepted by His servants and the other is that He accepts the will of His servants. By saying, "I shall try you with somewhat of fear and hunger", ALLAH expresses that the wave of Grace and Mercy is in motion. In short, these two aspects of prayer should always be borne in mind ; sometimes God wants to have His Own Will done, and sometimes He does His servant's will. It is, as it were, a friendly relation. Our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of ALLAH be on him, occupies the loftiest position both in respect of the acceptance of his prayer and in respect of complete resignation to the Will of God. Most of the people who approach the saints and godly people with request for prayer, do so simply to try and test them. They are unaware of the true philosophy of prayer, so they cannot derive full benefit from their prayer, but the wise do. The truth is that, if there were no system of prayer, the godly people would have died. Those who are deprived of the blessings of prayer, are deprived of it because of their ignorance of the

two aspects of prayer.

XXIV

For the aceptance of prayer, man should fully confess his own weaknesses and frailties. The more he realises his own weaknesses, the more he will find himself in need of Divine help, and this will give him an impulse and incentive for prayer. When a man is in danger, distress or sore straits, he cries and shouts vehemently and asks help from others. Likewise, when a man looks into his own weaknesses, failings and short-comings, and finds himself in need of Divine help, his soul pours itself out at the Divine Thresh-hold, being restless in anguish and pathos, and cries and calls upon God, saying, 'My Lord, My Lord.' If you ponder over the Holy Quran, you will find that in the very first chapter ALLAH teaches the prayer, "Guide us in the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, and not of those who have incurred Thy displeasure and those who have gone astray."

XXV

A reflection of the Holy Quran makes it clear that ALLAH hears our prayers and He is very near; but if prayer is offered without having regard to His names and attributes, it produces no effect. Simply on account of not knowing this secret, people are being ruined. I have heard many people say, "We prayed much, but our prayers produced no effect," and as a result, they have turned athiest. The fact is that every affair is governed by some rules and regulations. Similarly, prayer, too, is under some rules and regulations. Those who say that their prayers are not accepted, do not have regard to these rules which are essential for the acceptance of prayer. So their prayers are not accepted.

XXVI

Submit your supplications to God in your five daily prayers; supplicate in your own language, too, it is not forbidden. One cannot find pleasure in prayer, until one has concentration of mind, and the mind cannot be concentrated without a sense of humility, which again is produced only when one realises what

he recites. So, if one submits one's own supplicatien in one's language, it is likely to produce fervour and pathos. It must not, however, lead one to think that Prayer may be offered only in one's own language. What I mean is that after the recitation of the prescrited Prayers and formulas of remembrance and glorification of God, you may pray to God in your own language ALLAH has graced the words of the Prescribed Prayers with blessings, so you must recite these set Prayers in Arabic. Prescribed Prayers are nothing but occasions of supplications. So in the Prescribed Prayer, implore ALLAH that He may save you from the calamities of this life and the next, and that you be blessed with a good and happy end. Pray for your own wives and children too. Be righteous, and keep away from all sorts of evil.

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XXVII

As regards sympathy for humanity, my faith is that until one prays for one's enemies, heart is not purified. In the verse, "Call Me I shall answer", ALLAH has not laid it down that if you pray for an enemy, your prayer shall not be accepted. It is my faith that to pray for the enemy was the practice of our Prophet, peace and blessings of ALLAH be on him. It is through his prayer that Hazrat Omar, ALLAH be pleased with him, became Muslim. He often used to pray for the guidance of Hazrat Omar. So, out of narrow-mindedness, you should not have personal enmity with anybody, and you should not be, in reality, malevolent, or have ill-will against anyone. Thank God, I have no such enemy, for whom I have not prayed two or three times. There is not a single one. And the same I admonish you and teach you to do.

XXVIII

Exhorting a member of the Community to pray for his hostile father, Hazrat says: "Pray for your father earnestly. Father's prayer for his son and son's prayer for his father are accepted. If you yourself pray for your father, then my prayer will also produce effect."

XXIX

He who passes his peaceful days in sensual gratification,

and prays to ALLAH in times of distress, is not blessed with acceptance. When Divine chastisement actually visits one, the door of 'Tauba' (acceptance of repentance) is closed. So, how fortunate is the person who is absorbed in prayer before Divine chastisement is inflicted and gives 'Sadqat' (practices charity), reveres Divine Injunctions, shows kindness to ALLAH'S creatures and does his deeds carefully and well. This is the sign of righteousness. A tree is known by its fruit. Similarly, a righteous person is also recognized easily.

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Jesus Did not Die on the Cross

Ten Arguments from the Bible

Maulana Abul Ata

Rendered into English by Ch. Ali Muhammad B.A.,B.T.

Jesus' Birth

Strangely enough, the three great nations of the world—Jews, Christians and Muslims are at variance with regard, both, to the birth as well as the death of Jesus Christ who was born among the Jews. They (the Jews) declare his birth to be illegitimate and they are guilty of uttering a grievous calumny against Mary, mother of Jesus. They declare him to be misfit to "enter the congregation of the Lord" because of his illegitimate birth (God Forbid). The Christians, on the other hand, believe that Jesus Christ was born without the agency of an earthly father and that he was the son of God Himself. This shows that both the Jews and the Christians have gone to the opposite extremes as regards Jesus' birth. The Muslims, on their part, believe that Jesus, no doubt, was born without the agency of an earthly father, but he was not the son of God. A fatherless birth may be a strange incident but it is not unnatural. There have been cases in medical history where innocent virgins have given birth to babes. Even Adam, the progenitor of the modern human race is unanimously believed by the three great nations of the world to be born without the agency of either father or mother. The Muslims believe that Jesus was a true prophet of God. His birth, without the agency of man, has nothing to do with his sonship or his divinity. He was a human, pure and simple. Jesus invariably calls himself the 'Son of man' in the New Testament.

Jesus' Death.

His death is equally a controversial affair with the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims. The Jews believe that Jesus died on the cross because he was a false prophet, in this connection they quote the Bible, "And if a man have committed a sin worthy

of death, and he be be to put to death, and thou hang him on a tree" is "the accursed of God," (Deut 21:23). According to them, Jesus was a false prophet, therefore he died on the cross as the accursed of God.

The Christians also believe that Jesus was hanged on the cross and died an accursed death, Says Paul:

> "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Galatians 3:13).

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But the Holy Quran declares that Christ did not die on the Cross. God saved him from death by crucifixion in the same way as He saves His dear ones from tribulations. Did not Jonah the Prophet come out alive from the belly of the whale? The fact of the matter is that Jesus Christ only fell into a swoon on the Cross, but when he was taken down from it he recovered and then died a natural death at the good old age of 120.

On tbe strength of their belief that Jesus was a false prophet the Jews, particularly the Pharisees of his time brought serious political charges against him alleging that he was disloyal to the Roman Emperor and that he claimed himself to be the king of the Jews. The governor, Pilate, was not convinced of his guilt but being influenced by the tumult of the multitude he delivered Jesus to be crucified. They put him on the cross where he remained, at the utmost, for three or four hours only and then was taken down in a swoon and placed in a sepulchre in a garden nearby.

Now in those days it took several days for criminals to die on the cross. They suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst and in most cases their legs were broken. They died a lingering death extending over several days. But it was not so in the case of Jesus Christ. Incidently he was put on the Cross on a Friday afternoon. The following being the Sabbath day..... a day of religious observance by the Jews... .....no criminal could remain or the Cross on that Holy day, so he was taken down from it after about three or four hours. The loss of blood

from the wounds caused him to fall into a swoon. He was taken for a *dead* man. His body was placed in a spacious sepulchre in a garden by Joseph of Arimathaea, his own disciple. Jesus being still alive in the sepulchre, left it on the third day in disguise, met his disciples at Galilee and ate with them. His wounds were healed by the application of an ointment especially prepared by his disciples for the purpose.

This is the natural story of Jesus' Crucifixion but the Christians give a strange version of his death which is not only unnatural but against historical evidence as well as logic. They believe that Jesus actually died on the Cross but on the third day he rose up again, met his disciples, and then rose up to the heavens. What a paradox ! What a myth ! Modern Christianity rests on the belief that Jesus died on the Cross. But if it is proved that he did not die on the cross nor did he rise up from the dead, then the whole edifice of Christianity tumbles down to the ground. Paul, who is the real founder of modern Christianity, himself says :

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> "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain." (Corinthians 15 : 14).

The late Dr. Zwemer, the well-known American missionary, says :

> "If our belief in the death of Christ on the Cross is wrong then the whole of Christianity is a farce".

I Jonah's Sign

Now we proceed with our arguments from the Bible itself to show that Jesus did not die on the Cross. We read in the New Testament :

> (a) "And when the people were gathered thick together, he (jesus) began to say, this is an evil generation : they seek a sign ; and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Nine-

vites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation". (St. Luke 1.:29,30).

(b) "But he answered and said unto them, an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nignts in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matthew 12 : 39,40.)

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Jesus Christ is said here to give a sign to the people of his own time as Jonas the prophet had given to the Ninevites. Now what was the sign given by Jonas to the Ninevites? The Bible says :

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I and thou heardest my voice." (Jonah 1:17, 2;1.2.)

According to this verse of the Bible, Jonah was swallowed up by a big fish where he remained three days and three nights and then came out alive from the belly of the fish. It was a sign given to the Ninevites. Jonah prayed to God for deliverance while in the belly of the fish. The Lord heard his prayer and Jonah came out alive. Jesus says no sign shall be given to the evil and adulterous generation of his time except that of Jonas. Now what is the resemblance between the two signs of Jonah and Jesus. It is nothing but going *alive* into the belly of the fish and the heart of the earth and coming out *alive*. Both Jonah and Jesus cried by reason of their respective afflictions and prayed to their Lord for deliverance. The prayers of both were heard. If Jesus did not enter the heart of the earth (sepulchre) *alive* and come out *alive*, where is the resemblance between the two signs? Jesus promised

to show only one sign to the generation of his time, but even if that one sign be not proved to be true, is there anything else to prove the truth of his claim to be a prophet? Jesus' reference to the sign of Jonah simply means that he would not die on the cross. Therefore, there is every reason to believe that the swoon theory is based, not on a wrong hypothesis.

II Pilate's wife sees a dream.

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> "When he (Pilate) was set down on the judgement seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have you nothing to do with that Just man (Jesus): for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him". (Matt. 27:19.)

The lady's dream was really true and quite opportune. It purports to mean that Christ be saved from the accursed death on the Cross. God saves His dear ones by means of dreams of others as was the case with Joseph who was released from the jail having interpreted the two dreams of Pharaoh. God wanted to protect Jesus against his enemies, hence the dream of the Roman governor's wife which influenced his judgement.

I } The Roman Governor's sympathatic attituede

The Jews presented the case of Jesus Christ to Pilate, the Roman Governor of Palestine. He held a judicial inquiry into the case and declared that he was not guilty of the charges brought against him. He said unto them.

> "Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him". (Luke 23:14.)

> "He went out again unto the Jews and said unto them, I find in him no fault at all. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto

you one at the passover: will ye, therefore, that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber". (St. John 18:38, 40.)

"And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar". (John 19:12.)

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From the references given above, it is evident that the Governor regards Jesus innocent of all the charges brought against him by the Jews, he tries his utmost to release him but when the Jews threatened to report of him to the Caesar at Rome he yielded to them and handed Jesus over to them. But secretly he took measures to see that Jesus should be saved. He had his wife's dream before him and he knew full well that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

IV Pilate's scheme to save Christ.

Pilate, the Governor, was thorougly convinced of the innocence of Jesus Christ, he therefore, had a pre-planed scheme to save Jesus' life. As a responsible official of the Roman Empire he could not openly come to the forefront, but he was the master-mind behind the whole scheme and the chief actor in the drama. Other characters of the show were Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable councillor and disciple of Jesus Christ. He had already had a sepulchre hewn out in a rock in a garden nearby. Another actor in the drama was a learned Jew named Nicodemus who was in the know of the whole matter. We read of him in St. John:

"And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes about an hundred pound weight."

It was very clever of Pilate to choose Friday afternoon

as the time of Jesus' crucifixion so that he could not remain on the cross after sunset, the following day being Sabbath, so holy to the Jews. He selected Joseph and Nicodemus as the most trusted friends to execute the pre-arranged scheme. All necessary measures were adopted to bring Jesus to conciousness. Otherwise what did Nicodemus mean by bringing the mixture of myrrh and aloes. Jesus was shown to have died in official records to pacify the Jews and the Imperial government at Rome. Joseph of Arimathaea boldly asked the Governor to hand over the 'body' of Jesus which request he readily granted. If the plan was not pre-concieved, how could the Governor hand over the 'body' of Jesus to a stranger from outside. There is reason to believe that Jesus Christ himself must have been informed of the whole plan so that his prophecy might come true that as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Nicodemus' meeting with Jesus Christ the previous night brings into lime - litght the whole story.

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V Duration of Crucifixion

The Duration of crucifixion or the period of time for which Jesus remained on the Cross was not long enough to warrant his death on the Cross. Criminals generally took several days to die a lingering death on the cross on account of the loss of blood from the wounds on hands and feet, the physical pain and the pangs of hunger and thirst. The minimum time of death on the cross ranged between 24 and 28 hours but in some cases it took several days to die on the cross. In such cases it became necessary to break the legs of the criminals so that death may be hastened and consummated.

Let us now probe into the matter of Jesus' crucifixion. The New Testament tells us that Jesus remained on the cross for a few hours only. The actual duration of time Jesus remained on the cross was not more than three or four hours. Now Jesus Christ who was in the prime of his youth (33 years) and enjoyed excellent health, could not be expected to have died within so short a time even so when his legs were not broken

as was done in the case of the two robbers crucified with him the same day.

It may not be out of place here to note that, according to the Roman calander the day began with the rising of the sun and ended with its setting. The same custom is in vogue even to this day in Arab countries particularly Arabia. According to St. John (19:14) it was about the sixth hour of the day (Friday) that Pilate spoke last to the Jews vis-a-vis Jesus' crucifixion and handed him over to them. "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour". And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, LAMA SABACHTHANI, my God My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (St. Mark, 15:33, 34)

This shows that Jesus retained his consciousness up to the 9th hour of the day and then he fell into a swoon, that the New Testament writers call "giving up the ghost". None of the writers was present on the spot to stand an eye-witness. The 'swoon' was taken, to be 'death' and 'death on the cross' means an accursed death. Do we not read in the Bible, "for he that is hanged is accursed of God", (Deut. 21.23). What an audacity on the part of Christians to call a true prophet of God' to be the accursed of God.

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VI Coming out of Blood & Water.

> "Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was 'dead' already, they brake not his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water". (St. John 21:32-35)

The soldiers did not break the legs of Jesus for they took him for a dead man while actually he was in a state of swoon, or just to silence the angry Jews he was declared to be a 'dead' man. But one of the soldiers incidently "pierced his side and forthwith there came out blood and water," which is a sure sign of life for blood and water do not come out of

a dead man's body. There is much food for thought for those who care to ponder over it.

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VII No eye-witness of crucifixion.

Three writers of the Gospels state that there was darkness over all the land from the sixth to the ninth hour that there was an earthquake and the rocks were rent and the veil of the temple was rent in twain. It is a matter of common experience that at the time of a severe dust-storm accompanied by an earthquake, people generally hasten to go home and they do not enjoy the luxury of a bloody sight-seeing. Now imagine for a moment who could stand an eye-witness to tell story the that Jesus actually died on the cross. The Jews, if, at all, there were any on the spot, must have run away at the sight of the rising storm and the shaking of the earth must have frightened them to turn on their heals and hasten to their homes. As to the disciples they had already fled from the scene of crucifixion. Peter "began to curse and to swear saying, I know not this man (Jesus) of whom you speak". (St. Mark 14 . 71)

"And they all forsook him (Jesus) and fled." (Ditto 14 : 50)

To be brief, there was no one present on the scene who could definitely and certainly say that he saw Jesus 'giving up the ghost'. This is all mere conjecture and imagation.

VIII Jesus' mission to the lost sheep of Israel.

1. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19 : 10)

2. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10 : 16)

3. "And he said unto them, I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also ; For therefore am I sent." (Luke 5 : 42)

4. "But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto

the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Math. 15 : 24)

From the quotations given above, it is clear that Jesus' mission was to preach to all the twelve tribes of Israel that were scattered in the eastern countries extending from Palestine to India at the time of Jesus' appearance. Of the twelve tribes of Israeal there were at that time, only two tribes in Palestine while the other ten were found scattered in the lands streching from Palestine to the confines of India. Jesus cannot be said to have been successful in his mission if he does not address and preach to the ten lost sheep of Israel. Jesus' supposed death on the cross at the early age of 33 gives a smashing blow to the mission on which he was sent. The truth of the matter is that Jesus Christ, after his escape from the cross, did migrate to the east in search of the lost sheep for which there is ample historical evidence and recently supported by the modern 'finds' of the archaeology. Jesus found his lost sheep in Persia, Afghanistan and Kashmir, preached to them and comparatively he was much more successful here than in Palestine. He died a natural death and was burried at Sirinagar, Kashmir.

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IX Jesus' Victory over his enemies.

Addressing his disciples Jesus says :

> "In the world you shall have tribulation but be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world", (St. John 16 : 33).

Now what doth Jesus' victory consist in? In his death on the cross or in his escape from the cross? If he died on the cross then the Jews were successful because the very aim of theirs was to prove that he was false in calling himself the Messiah. They had in their support, the Biblical statement that "he that is hanged is the accursed of God" (Deut. 21 : 23) But if we believe that he was taken down from the cross alive, (in a state of swoon of course) and he entered the heart of the earth alive and came out of it alive, then he can rightly be said to have overcome his enemies and frustrated all their evil designs. Jesus says :

"For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation." In other words Jesus says to the Jews that God Almighty would save him from the clutches of death in the same way as He had saved Jonah from the belly of the whale. The similarity between the two incidents can be real and genuine only when Jesus enters the heart of the earth (grave) *alive* and comes out of it *alive*.

X His Prayer was heard.

From the study of the Bible we learn that God listens to the prayers of his apostles and saves them from tribulations and trials. Says the New Testament.

(i) "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain : and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit". (James 5 ; 1 -18)

Again we read :

(ii) "And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, father I thank thee that thou has heard me, And I knew that thou hearest me always : but because of the people which stand by I said it that they may believe that thou hast sent me". (St. John 11 : 4 , 42)

(iii) "And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee ; take away this cup from me : nevereth-less not what I will, but what thou wilt". (St. Mark 14 : 36)

From the quotations given above it is clear that Jesus was terribly afraid of being put to the cross, so he fervently prayed that the bitter cup be taken away from him. Jesus passionately and fervently prayed to God that he might be saved the accurred death on the Cross ; for if he died on the cross, how could he then, say that he had overcome the world ; in case he died on the cross, the mission of his whole life would come to nought and wrongdoers could challenge his claim to prophethood. The

thought of death on the cross was simply grating upon his soul. Being a righteous prophet he was not afraid of mere death he was certainly afraid of dying on the cross as such a death could be interpreted to mean an accursed death which was the very negation of his prophetic mission. He "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared". (Hebrews 5 : 7) Hence we must presume that his earnest prayer was, no doubt, heard and he miraculously escaped death by crucifixion and lived long enough to preach his mission to the lost sheep of the Israelities in the East.

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The Individual in Christianity

M. Naseem Saifi

Mr Z. A. Suleri, a Pakistan Times Columnist, accompained President Muhammad Ayub Khan on his recent tour of the Soviet Union On his return he published his impressions about the peoples of the Soviet Union and in doing that he devoted quite a considerable portion of his article to the present condition of the Muslims in Turkistan. He expressed the opinion that whereas the Muslims in the various States of the Soviet Union had resisted the anti-Islamic influences and retained their identity, however blurred it may seem to be, Christianity would have been suffocated out of existence, if the churches were closed.

This statement is as true as it has been frankly expressed. But Mr. Joshua Fazl-ud-Din, a Christian leader of some repute, took exception to it. He said *inter alia* :

> "Mr. Suleri discloses his misunderstanding about the strength of Christian life also. According to him it emerges from the churches primarily and not the individual and would be suffocated out of existence, if they were closed. The fact is that primarily the individual is the greatest discovery of Christianity. The individual lives ever and ever with Christ, only if he dies with him on the Cross. Dying with Christ, the individual arises again with him, never to die again."

Since I felt that Mr. Joshua Fazl-ud-Din had not done justice to the subject under discussion, I should like to ask him does he really mean to say that Christianity was conceived on the Cross and born with Resurrection? I wish he had read the New Testament with greater care and with a more critical eye than he has done so far. When Jesus was on the cross, the

disciples had all fled the greatest of them all—Peter had already denied him three times. When the supposed Resurrection took place, only one or two disciples had the courage to visit the tomb and since Jesus knew the stuff of which the disciples were made, he told them that he would meet them far from the gaze of the people.

In fact, had it been left to the faith of the individuals, Christianity would have been really suffocated. It is only the organisation that proves to be the saving grace for it. Will Mr. Joshua think over it once again?

The fact remains that contrary to what Mr. Joshua has asserted, the very thing that is missing in Christianity is the individual. The character of Jesus as an individual depicted by the New Testament is that of a man who may have possessed every good quality but the courage. He was not confident of the consequences of his claim to Messiahship and therefore did not like it to be known by the people.

> "And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on the earth be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." (Math 16:20)

Also, the end of a discussion between Jesus and the Jews is described by St. John in the following words:

> "Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." (John 8:59)

Indeed Jesus as an individual was, as described by the New Testament, full of fear and lacked courage more than anything else. We are told:

> "Then from that day forth they took counsel to-

> gether for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples." (John 11:53,54)

We also cannot forget what Jesus said on the cross. That was the cry of an impatient person whose courage had given way, if he had any courage at all. Eli, *Eli Lama Sabachthani*, are not the words that a courageous leader of men would utter, only if to boost the morale of his followers. When he apprehended his arrest, his condition is depicted in the following words:

> "Then he said unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.....watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Math 26:3 ,41)

The condition of Jesus at the time of this prayer was indeed pitiable, for St. Luke tells us that:

> "And being in agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." (22:44)

Even after what is known as Resurrection and with which according to Mr. Joshua, Christianity was born, Jesus of the Bible could not pick up enough courage to meet his disciples openly. We are told that Jesus instructed some of his disciples:

> "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee and there shall they see me." (Math 28:10)

And if he met them in the habitations at all it was behind the closed doors. St. John says:

> "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, peace be unto you." (20:19)

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Also,

> "And after eight days again the disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, peace be unto you." (John 20:26)

But mostly he showed himself to the disciples (and he never showed himself to the Jews) only in the wilderness or in some other secluded places. We are told by St. John.

> "After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself." (21:1)

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A leader with this lack of courage could certainly not inculcate courage in his disciples and that is why we find that the disciples are depicted by the Gospel writers as a cowardly pack of people. As for example, when Jesus was being taken to the place where he was to be crucified, we are told that

> "they all forsook him and fled" (Mark 10:50)

The greatest of his disciples had not the courage to admit that he knew his Master. St. Mark says:

> "And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, "This is one of them." And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilean and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak." (66:71)

The disciples who had seen their Master fear at every step could not but hide themselves after the alleged Resurrection. An instance of that has already been quoted (see John 20:19) I wonder how Mr. Joshua can see in all these things the discovery of indivudal as presented by Christianity. The genesis of Christianity, the readers will agree with me, is the fear of the individual. It is only the Church—the well-knit organisation—that saves it from being suffocated out of existence. Isn't it?

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